United Nations S/2015/234

Security Council

Distr.: General
6 April 2015
English
Original: French

Letter dated 31 March 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the exchange of letters of 20 and 24 December 2013 (S/2013/764 and S/2013/765) with the President of the Security Council concerning the deployment of a static United Nations guard unit to strengthen the security of the compounds of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and the United Nations Support Office for the African Union Mission in Somalia (UNSOA) located in Mogadishu.

As indicated in these letters, in addition to the protection provided by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Somali National Security Forces, the Council took note of the proposed arrangements for the establishment of a United Nations guard unit that would form part of the overall security concept by providing "inner ring" static protection for UNSOM and UNSOA facilities and installations in Mogadishu.

The Council authorized for this purpose the deployment of a guard battalion composed of static guard companies, an extraction and reinforcement team and an adequately composed logistics support company (410 in total), to be provided as contingents by Member States, with the following functions:

(a) Provide static security, patrols and access control for UNSOM and UNSOA facilities and installations in Mogadishu, including should UNSOM move outside Mogadishu International Airport;

(b) Act as a deterrent against possible attacks by extremist elements on those facilities and installations;

(c) Provide rapid extraction capability within Mogadishu International Airport;

(d) Support AMISOM and the Somali National Security Forces in extracting and relocating United Nations personnel who are outside the airport area in the event that they are under imminent threat of physical violence.

I take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the support and assistance provided by the African Union and the Federal Government of Somalia to the United Nations in this regard.

In my letter of 20 December 2013, I expressed my intention to review the continuing need for the presence of the United Nations guard unit on an annual basis by conducting a security assessment. In this context, and following the attack

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on the Mogadishu International Airport of 25 December 2014, the United Nations reviewed the current security arrangements for the UNSOM and UNSOA facilities and installations in Mogadishu. This review highlighted an increased level of threat as well as increases in the number and size of compounds needing protection, and identified additional security requirements that cannot be addressed at the current troop level of 410.

Based on this security assessment, I intend to increase the strength of the guard unit in Mogadishu to a total of 530 personnel, an increase of 120 troops. The additional troops will reinforce the existing battalion and will also be responsible for a new compound, namely, the United Nations guard unit base. This increase will be in line with the current concept of operations for the guard unit. The Federal Government of Somalia was notified on 18 March.

In accordance with the arrangements in the exchange of letters of 20 and 24 December 2013, should other situations warrant the use of one or more additional guard unit(s), especially in regions other than Mogadishu, I will revert to the Council with advice on the supplementary measures that may be required. I also intend to continue to review the continuing need for the presence of the United Nations guard unit on an annual basis by conducting a yearly security assessment.

A protocol of amendment to the status-of-mission agreement for UNSOM, which would extend the necessary legal protection to the guard unit and to the State or States contributing contingents, is still under negotiation with the Government of Somalia.

Pending its conclusion and entry into force, it is to be understood that the provisions of the model status-of-forces agreement between the United Nations and host countries (A/45/594, annex) that apply to, and in respect of, the military personnel of national contingents assigned to the military component of a United Nations operation and to the property, funds and assets of the States contributing those contingents shall apply provisionally to, and in respect of, the military personnel of national contingents assigned to the guard unit and to the property, funds and assets of the States contributing those contingents.

I would be grateful if you could confirm that the above arrangements are acceptable to the Council. If so, it is my intention to take the necessary steps to increase the strength of the guard unit as soon as possible. In keeping with existing practice, I will, in due course, notify the Council of the concurrence of the troop-contributing countries whose units would be deployed to Mogadishu.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon